

Site:	<u>Martin Co</u>
Break:	<u>2.10</u>
Other:	_____

85499

**POLREP NUMBER 15
 KENTUCKY/WEST VIRGINIA COAL SLURRY SPILL
 MARTIN COUNTY COAL CORPORATION
 INEZ, KENTUCKY**

DATE: NOVEMBER 25, 2000

TO: DOUG LAIR, EPA REGION IV
 CHARLIE KLEEMAN, EPA REGION III

FROM: JOHN GILBERT, EPA ERT

I. BACKGROUND

See prior POLREPs.

II. CURRENT ACTIVITIES

(FROM 1700 HOURS, SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2000, TO 1700 HOURS, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 2000)

Weather: Last weeks weather conditions were seasonable for the region, with low temperatures in the upper 20s and highs in the mid 40s with scattered snow flurries. The forecast for next week calls for mostly to partly cloudy skies and seasonal temperatures with a slight possibility of precipitation. Concerns over possible flooding and migration of the slurry are first and foremost.

Personnel: MCCC continues to respond to the spill 24 hours a day, 7 days a week with their company and subcontractor resources. Due to the Thanksgiving Holiday, work was discontinued on Thursday and continued in non-residential areas only on Friday. The company reports approximately 540 personnel and contractors are responding. Federal and State agencies continue to support and provide guidance to the company's response team (ICS). Federal, state and local agencies represented on-scene include:

Federal: EPA OSC (Fred Stroud), EPA ERT (John Gilbert), USCG Strike Team, U.S. DOL-MSHA, U.S. DOI-OSM, EPA START Contractor

State: KYDNREPC (Tom Gabbard), Roger Martin, KY Dept. of Fish and Wildlife Resources, Kentucky Dept. for Surface Mining and Reclamation (KY DSMRE)

Totals of recovered sludge/slurry material that has been pumped and or hauled into impoundments located on or around the site are located in the attached tables. Ongoing operations in Coldwater and Wolf Creek watersheds are as follows:

Coldwater Creek

Clearing creek blockages at the Chapman property is a major priority. EPA and MCCC are working on obtaining access on properties to avoid delays in cleanup operations. Blockages are being accessed from the stream bed channel where possible. Equipment is accessing the channel from alternate entrance points. The Mullet Bridge and A-frame house blockages are currently being worked on, completion should occur by Monday.

The Creek channel continues to be dipped using an excavator (for the second time in some places above gate 4 to prevent the need for future dipping downstream). Some properties are near the stage where final grading for restoration can be done. MCCC has contracted a "clear cutting contractor" to help with handling trees and other vegetation destroyed during spill and subsequent operations. Gas lines along and crossing the creek are being monitored daily for damage by Columbia Gas.

Tandem and articulated trucks continue hauling operations (see Table 1). Road maintenance continues and conditions have improved. Road construction is complete to the Lynn Bark confluence, solidification activities continue.

Reclaiming (filling original cells) and constructing new cells at the Old MTR continues. Issues about the potential for runoff from stockpiled sludge have been raised and will be addressed by the installation of silt fencing or berm around the piles.

An additional submersible pump is being installed below Creekwood Estates and black water will be pumped to the Cain property sediment settling ponds. An additional 2000 gpm trash pump is being installed at the Cain sump to back up the current submersible (1800 gpm) pump.

Wolf Creek

The major priority at Wolf Creek continues to be clearing the blockage at the Maynard Fork Culverts. Crews are working on reducing sludge levels mechanically with excavators and by dredging. Debris during dredging and removal activities has hampered progress, EPA has suggested a grappler attachment for the excavator(s). MCCC's goal is to have this completed by mid-next week.

MCCC has identified 8 locations downstream of Fred's weir where material can be loaded out from the creek channel. Posi-Track loaders are currently pushing material to excavators. MCCC's goal in the Wolf Creek drainage is to have three routes for hauling, currently there are two. Road conditions near the Pegasus Mine are in poor condition and are being addressed.

Big Andy, Old Slurry Station, security gate 3, and slurry impoundment pumps are operational. Pumps and sediment traps are being serviced on an as need basis. An extension pipe has been installed on the decant line.

A truck dump (sludge load off area) is being constructed below the main gate 2 area. MCCC has proposed constructing additional cells at the TC area for the Tandem truck to off load.

Creek bank washing/flushing activities are ongoing in divisions WC, WD, and WE, between Pigeon Roost and Pilgrim Mine (see Table 2). Two Hydroseeders demobilized on 11/18, additional Hydroseeders were mobilized on 11/20.

No visible suspended solids were noted at the Wolf Creek/Tug Fork confluence, Blackburn contracting Inc. is taking daily samples at the Wolf Creek (No.4 Discharge)

Tug Fork and Big Sandy River

Kermit WTP is currently operational and pumping water from the Tug Fork into their plant for water treatment. The in-line turbidity meter was delivered to the Kermit WTP and will be installed this week.

Ft. Gay WTP has discontinued bypass pumping due to blackwater entering their treatment system. The bypass system originally installed for testing was not working properly. MCCC engineers are working with Ft. Gay WTP to evaluate the possibility of repositioning their water intake. Winterization plans for temporary lines is proceeding at an expected pace.

START Region III has been obtaining daily turbidity readings at several location on the Big Sandy and Tug Fork Rivers (see Table 3)

On Monday, November 20, the United States Coast Guard (USCG) accompanied Potesta and Associates on a sludge survey of the Tug Fork of the Big Sandy River. Their destination was to begin at Kermit, WV and end in Fort Gay, WV. The samples that were taken from the river were to be compared with samples that were taken immediately after the slurry spill. In a majority of the cases, the amount of the slurry solid was less than the assessment taken earlier. The slurry assessment survey was to be completed on Wednesday, November 22.

General/Issues

MCCC contracted a stream restoration specialist from E&E, Inc. to assist in generating a riverbank and flood plain restoration plan. The E&E representative spent two days surveying the affected watersheds before demobilizing. He will coordinate his efforts with EPA ERT representative, Harry Allen.

Mr. Harold Owens with MSHA addressed the environmental group regarding revegetation of the affected areas along Coldwater and Wolf Creeks. Mr. Owens participated in the Buffalo Creek Coal Slurry cleanup in 1972. During the Buffalo Creek cleanup, fertilization and hydroseeding were selected as an alternative to excavation along the river banks and flood plains. The SAC team plans to visit the Buffalo Creek area to assess the success of the vegetated areas.

The Potesta Toxicity report was submitted on Monday. KYDOW private well sampling data was received and individual well owners were notified by the state.

Three seeding test plots are underway at the log yard.

III. FUTURE ACTIVITIES

- A. Continuing remediation efforts including pumping and solidifying slurry from both watersheds. Solidification efforts will continue using lime and mechanical methods to excavate the sludge.
- B. Crews will continue working downstream excavating sludge from private yards and seed for erosion control.
- C. EPA and MCCC will continue gaining access to properties along Wolf Creek and Coldwater Creek in order to maintain clean up operations.
- D. Construction on new sedimentation impoundment cells will continue.
- E. The USCG will continue to accompany Potesta and Associates on a sludge survey from Kermit to Ft. Gay in the Tug Fork.